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**and much more!**

## Director's Message



Lisa-Michele Church, Executive Director

The New Year is a great time to set goals! I am taking this time of year to reflect on all of your accomplishments during the past year with regard to our Department goals. You will recall that when I joined DHS last year I asked you to focus on these department-wide goals: 1) collaborate on cross cutting issues, 2) maintain fiscal responsibility, 3) improve employee recognition, 4) communicate our work positively, 5) improve community relationships, 6) increase services to underserved populations.

I am pleased to report that we have made real progress in all of these areas. I will highlight just a few of them, but I know there are many more efforts underway. In the area of collaboration, we have had great efforts on department-wide issues such as **Alan Ormsby's** (DAAS) work group on Medicare Part D and **Paul Day's** (DSPD) work group on provider rates. We are maintaining fiscal responsibility with our improved efforts in **Vaughn Emmett's** (OFO) to conduct management analysis, and I am pleased with the careful budgeting that goes on in the divisions.

The Human Touch has been a fabulous start at employee recognition,

but **Donna Russell** (EDO) has even more exciting things in store this year with our employee awards luncheon. We have had several positive news stories and news events throughout the year that communicate our work positively to the public. I was pleased with **Carol Sisco's** (EDO) and **Brent Kelsey's** (DSAMH) work on the Meth Task Force, as well as **Chuck Diviney's** (DAAS) work on an aging news story and some features on our DCFS work.

Many of you are out in the community talking to our stakeholders and improving our relationships, including **Adam Trupp** in his new role with EDO, **Dan Maldonado** (JJS) with the courts and law enforcement, and **Ron Stromberg** (DSAMH) with the local mental health centers. In order to help serve our minority populations, we have solid efforts being made by JJS and by **Manuel Romero** (EDO) in his new department-wide role. **Nanon Talley** (JJS) has done a good job of sparking discussion on services for female youth offenders.

These represent just a small part of the meaningful accomplishments that result from goal setting. Thanks to all of you for helping DHS give even better services to Utahns.

## Happy New Year to Utah's Seniors!

**F**rail, homebound, older Utahans all over the state started out the New Year with a boost! Often we only think of the special Holiday projects for children, yet Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) staff know how much our older citizens enjoy being remembered too. One senior summed it up saying, "It was so exciting to be remembered!"

**I**n Tooele, 42 homebound seniors were treated with special seasonal foods and fruits.

**I**n the Six County area around Richfield, seniors found bags of treats with their home delivered meals.

“Thank you, thank you! I can’t remember the last time I was this excited.” One woman told her caseworker in the Orem area. In Orem, the staff of the Association of Governments (AOG) goes all out! Since 1999 they have partnered with Harmons, Maceys, RC Willey and the Women’s Chamber of Commerce in Utah County to ensure 60 people receive gifts such as blankets, afghans, gift cards, special food items and personal care items.

**I**n Carbon, Emery and Grand counties bags of treats were in the home delivered meals.

**I**n Cache and Box Elder counties, 30 food boxes were delivered to clients who were all alone for the Holiday season.

**I**n Ogden AAA case managers worked with the Swanson Foundation to bring afghans to 50 seniors. One man really wanted a videotape of his favorite old movie. As it turned out, the film was available only in DVD format. So the Swanson Foundation purchased the DVD and a DVD player for the man, and taught him how to use it! Seniors also received phone cards to keep in touch with loved ones.

**I**n Salt Lake City 350 seniors enjoyed gifts coordinated by SL County Aging staff through the Giving Tree Project. Staff and businesses take an “ornament” off the lobby tree and then purchase gifts for the senior described on the ornament. There was an overflow of gifts!



# The Human Touch

Thanks to Peggy Matlin (DAAS) for suggesting and coordinating this story.



## Let's get to know Mark Brasher,

New Director, Office of Recovery Services (ORS)

Catherine Taylor, ORS

Already, Mark has taken an ambitious stand on the emerging ORS of the future, and improved technology plays a large role in those innovations such as:

- Imaged documents instead of physical files
- Online application for services by customers
- Expanded use of the Internet to educate customers and allow them increased access to their case records
- Transmission of paternity establishment data between ORS and Vital Records.

Mark believes employees are the key to excellent service saying, "The best of technology can only do so much without a strong employee base to support it." He has placed a new emphasis on recruiting qualified employees, identifying and maximizing the unique abilities of existing employees; developing existing staff members into a strong workforce and doing everything possible given limited state government resources to notice and express appreciation for the extraordinary efforts of ORS employees.

Mark is a "hands-on" director using his high energy level and caring to keep direct involvement with people. He remains actively involved assuring constituent complaints are effectively and quickly resolved. He strives to identify issues before problems emerge and effect solutions before they magnify.

If you ask Mark about ORS, he will give you a fascinating organizational history having studied it carefully the last ten years. Asked about ORS workers accomplishments and contributions, Mark will gladly say even more. About himself, he would say far less.



Mark Brasher brings new eyes and vision for the future of ORS

Mark's dynamic leadership and expertise impacts other states through his service on the National Association of State Medicaid Directors (NASMD) and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). He was appointed to serve on the Federal resource team to develop and implement child support and Medicaid policy. We can all join Michael Deily, former Medicaid Director, Utah Department of Health as he said to Mark, "Congratulations on your appointment to the Medicaid Technical Assistance Group. I'm certain you will do a great job representing the interests of the Western states."

### Recognition Tool - *The "Southern Exposure: The Rag to Brag"*

The "Southern Exposure" is a great recognition tool used in the Southern Region of Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD). Susan Macnamara, Region Director and her staff use it to tell good stories about co-workers. Here are some examples:

#### • Spotlight on our new employees!

"Before working for DSPD I worked for Chrysalis as a direct support staff. I graduated from Southern Utah University in May just before I took this job. I have been married about a year and a half and we are expecting our first child, a baby boy, in April. That's about all I have to say about myself. Just an average guy." Tyson Terry – Cedar City office.

#### • Our Stars – Deserving Pats on the Back!

"For the past several years, Camille Colby has been working with a client to help him receive SSI. It has taken about two years, a significant amount of documentation, a lot of tenacity, but it is done!" (submitted by Lamont Felt)

Why not try your own office's "Rag to Brag"? It's an easy, fun and positive tool to recognize good work in your team. Then, share and tell us about it. [DLRussell@utah.gov](mailto:DLRussell@utah.gov)

Congratulations to the Southern Region DSPD staff for their excellent Recognition Tool!



## Embracing Leadership

**You may not think you are a leader yet; we are all leaders in some capacity as Human Services employees.** Several weeks ago, Lisa-Michele Church asked the division directors to answer a leadership question. The question posed to me was, "How does the Division of Aging and Adult Services provide statewide leadership when dealing with a group of independent local authorities?"

As I contemplated the answer, three major themes emerged:

- **Be a trustworthy leader**
- **Acknowledge good work**
- **Establish a clear vision for statewide leadership.**

I believe these themes can be adapted for a variety of leadership challenges.

First, a leader must earn the trust of the people he or she serves. A so-called leader who issues edicts and mandates in the absence of trust is doomed to fail.

I assured the AAA directors that I would be straightforward and honest with them. With me, what you see is what you get...mostly because I am a very bad liar. One of my many weaknesses is the inability to keep lies straight, so I refuse to get involved with "secret alliances" or other back-door shenanigans. Honesty is the best policy for leaders, although it is important to maintain confidentiality as appropriate.

Trust is further gained when the people a leader serves stand on equal footing. There cannot be "special relationships" or insiders who know more or have better access to the leader. Additionally, a leader needs to be out in front, leading the charge with energy and enthusiasm, vulnerable to the risks of failure. Finally with respect to trust, I embrace a philosophy that Governor Huntsman shared over 15 years ago at the University of Utah while I was a student there. As a guest lecturer in a leadership seminar, he said, "Leaders should make promises sparingly, but if a promise is made, move heaven and earth to make it happen."

The second major theme is acknowledge the good work that the local authorities are doing. For me, this is the AAA directors and their staff...but who are the local "authorities" within in your area of leadership? Give these partners or co-workers plenty of public praise, and limit criticism to private, constructive comments.

The third theme is to establish a clear vision for statewide leadership. An example may be helpful. Aging and Adult Services administers the Long-term Care Ombudsman program through the AAAs.

By Alan K. Ormsby, Director, DAAS



DAAS Director Alan Ormsby

This program has suffered from some misperceptions and has not received an increase in legislative funding for over a decade, despite a huge increase in the number of clients served. Experts have analyzed ways to improve the program, but nothing had been done. Lisa-Michele challenged me to improve it.

The first step was to define the problem and be sure the AAAs agreed. At this point, I was not concerned with defining solutions; I just wanted everyone to agree on the problem. Once the problem was defined, the AAAs and my staff met to agree upon goals and objectives. We had the opportunity to do a lot of listening, and we had to develop a pretty thick skin! In the end, we will do the right thing to better protect the rights of Utah's seniors, even if it is unpopular.

In one of her first executive leadership meetings, Lisa-Michele told us to embrace our positions as leaders. She said there is a reason we are in the position, so use the opportunity to improve the lives of the people we serve. Since we all are leaders in some capacity, I hope you will embrace your leadership role and serve in a way that improves the lives of others.



# The Human Touch

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## American Fork's Departments of Health and Human Services Team-Up!



Boxing Up The Gifts

**S**ub for Santa is an eleven-year team tradition for the American Fork staffs of Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and Department of Health (DOH).

“This project is done because the intake/wait list staff see the personal struggles families deal with on a daily basis,” said Tiffanie Best, DSPD. “It can become difficult for families to provide gifts when they are already struggling to maintain the basic needs for their children. We enjoy helping out!”

**D**SPD and DOH staffs forego purchasing office gifts and put their energy into helping two families. Two single parent families received clothes, furniture, food and blankets this year.” Tiffanie said, “It was fun and comforting to know that we would not just be giving them gifts, but we were also helping them with groceries for a period of time afterwards.”

“Yeah, now we don’t have to sit on cans.”

Marci Day, DSPD, shared the reactions of the second family when given a couch. She went on to say, “They were really giddy and excited. The 16 year old must have said, ‘Thanks!’ a dozen times. The younger boy was looking through the food and kept saying, ‘my favorite, my favorite’ about everything he saw.”

This American Fork tradition demonstrates, once again how employees surpass their job descriptions and show true “Human Service” to people.

Thank you to Susan Macnamara and Tiffanie Best for this story.

### “The best day I’ve had on my job was . . .

#### Division of Aging and Adult Services Staff as reported by Chuck Diviney :

“Giving legal advice to Santa Claus was the highlight of my first year at DAAS. Little did I imagine during an elder law presentation, there would be a senior in the audience, already dressed up as Santa for the Center’s Christmas celebration requesting legal advice! I learned an important lesson that day – most seniors, even Santa, need legal help.” (Jilene Gunther, SLC)

“The best day so far was one of my first days. After meeting with all the DAAS program managers, I was so impressed with how much they do and all the great projects they are doing. This is truly a great group of people to work with!” (Nels Homgren, SLC)

“Attending the Century Club celebrations. The Governor and the DAAS invite those 100+ years young to celebrate their lives and experiences. It is so amazing to talk with someone with so much life experience!” (Lee Ann Whitaker, SLC)

“My best day on the job is knowing I can say, “If you think you are too small to be effective, you’ve never been a Senior Assistant Caseworker for Adult Protective Services. We get the BIG jobs done!” (Sabine Jolley, Richfield)